

Vision 21 Implementation Committee

Meeting Minutes, July 20, 2006

Approved August 3, 2006

Members Present: Donna Brescia, Vinnie DeNovellis, Sara Oaklander, Meg O'Brien, Jennifer Page, Jay Szklut, Paul Santos, Kirk Hazlett

Members Absent: Paul Solomon, Austin Bliss, Ann Rittenberg

Others Present: Delores Keefe

1. Administrivia:

Meg O'Brien opened meeting and reported that since some had not been able to open the minutes from July 6, 2006, approval would be tabled until next meeting.

2. Continuation of discussion from last meeting on planning for public input/conversations:

2.1 Sara facilitated the discussion. The first step was to help us narrow options developed at last meeting. She presented criteria agreed upon by group in determining which action steps to pursue. The criteria are:

- Must be cheap;
- Not too labor intensive;
- Potential to reach/connect with quantity and diversity of people.

2.2 Sara presented a recap of the items discussed at last session, having grouped the concepts into 3 "buckets". (Sara's proposed buckets differed slightly from those developed in the last meeting, as she created a new "third" bucket of "Events and Related Ideas" whose items seemed different qualitatively from those in the other buckets. Her buckets are shown below, with the items she assigned to them.) The group accepted her rearrangement and we worked with her proposal. The buckets and items are below. (The numbers in parentheses following each item show the results of informal polling – through "dots" – a process described below.)

Bucket #1: "Inform and Educate"

- Use the town's website (4)
- Use Channel 8:
 - * Infomercials (3)
 - * Spots posing questions to provoke thinking (4)
 - * Elements of the Vision moving on screen in creative ways (0)
- Series of articles in Belmont Citizen (6)
- Electronic sign boards (0)
- Pocket cards (3)

- Inserts in tax/utility bills (6)
- Crossword puzzles/games in the Belmont Citizen Herald (2)
- Logo, newsletter, mascot (2)
- Sound system for announcing elements of the Vision (0)

Bucket # 2: “Inquire, Discuss and Engage”

- Bring people together to discuss each topic or Vision as a whole (7)
 - Conduct a series of community meetings (4)
 - Conduct a series of potluck suppers and/or coffees in homes (0)
 - ~~○ Bring the Vision to Town Meeting *~~
 - ~~○ Go to meeting of existing groups *~~
 - Invent transportable format that we can take to meetings and events (7)
 - Create giant display of story boards (3)
 - At meetings/events, hang on the wall: “things going on” and “things we wish were going on” and invite people to add ideas (5)
 - Create an adult education course (1)
 - Gather real life stories that illustrate elements of the Vision (1)
 - Create a “Vision Mobile” (decorate a vehicle) (0)
 - Use electronic/internet – based communication (2)
- (* Deleted by consensus before voting)

Bucket # 3: “Events and Related Ideas”

- Town Day: Vision trivia and /or scavenger hunt (6)
- Road Race (0)
- Photography contest (5)
- Poetry contest (0)
- Essay contest (1)
- Involve BHS students (2)
- Mock trial or debate at BHS (0)
- Involve BHS athletic teams (0)
- Thanksgiving football game tradition (2)
- “I got the Vision” t-shirts (0)
- “Vision Day” declared by the BOS (everyone must meet at least one new person) (3)
- Create a Vision website (1)
- 150th anniversary (6)

2.3 Clarification: After reviewing the buckets and ideas, Sara led the group in a brief discussion to clarify each idea. Small adjustments were made.

2.4 Paring down: Using the “dots” exercise, members signified their selection of items that most deserve the on-going consideration. (Each member could select up to 4 items in each category). The number of dots each item received is noted above.

2.5 The results of the “dots” exercise indicated the following items were of most interest to group:

Bucket # 1: “Inform and Educate” narrowed down to:

- i. Use town’s website;
- ii. Use channel 8: series of spots posing questions to provoke thinking;
- iii. Series of articles in Belmont Citizen Herald
- iv. Inserts in tax/utility bills.

Bucket # 2: “Inquire, Discuss, and Engage” narrowed down to:

- v. Bring people together to discuss each topic or the vision as a whole;
- vi. Conduct a series of community meetings;
- vii. Invent a transportable format that we can take to meetings and events;
- viii. At meeting/events, hang on the wall: “things going on” and “things we wish were going on” and invite people to add.

Bucket # 3: “Events and Related Ideas”

- ix. Town Day: Vision trivia and/or scavenger hunt;
- x. Photography Contest;
- xi. Vision Day declared by the Selectmen (everyone must meet one new person);
- xii. 150th Anniversary.

2.6 General observations ensued, including the following:

2.6.1 Clarification was sought regarding the specific market for these efforts. Meg O’Brien presented information on use of the Town website (hits per month). It was proposed that people have to have a reason to go to the website, then they’ll see other info on the website.

2.6.2 It was observed that there was little support for “use of electronic-based communication” within our group, resulting in it not being selected. We speculated that this might be because few of us on the committee really understand the possibilities of such functions as blogs, and perhaps electronic communication might appeal to younger residents. We agreed to leave that option open for further exploration.

2.7 Sara suggested noting, for future meetings, the following “things to remember”:

- o Results in the “Inform and Educate” bucket indicate we have settled into some traditional avenues --- and, it was noted, these are effective avenues.
- o Discussion that
 - there should be consistency or sustained use of some of these avenues over time, rather than sporadic use
 - Consider additional inform/educate channels that are less traditional
 - Consider electronic based connections

2.8 Jennifer suggested that each member take one of the 4 ideas that emerged in the “Inquire, Discuss and Engage” category and think through some detail that they envision around that idea – for discussion at next meeting.

3. Other business:

Jennifer distributed “Meet Belmont” flyers, giving each member 20 flyers to “Meet Belmont”, and asked members to distribute 10 to local shops and keep 10 to distribute to neighbors. Members signed up for business areas they would cover. Jay and Delores took copies for distribution at Town Hall offices.

4. Next meeting: August 3; then August 17.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Donna Brescia
Secretary Pro Tempore